



## Staff Recognized for their Assistance with the Odyssey Case Management System



*Chief Justice Gilbertson presents a Certificate of Recognition to Circuit Administrator Tony Benning in appreciation of the Third Judicial Circuit's assistance as the pilot site for the new Odyssey Case Management System Program.*

Forty-five Certificates of Recognition were distributed during a Recognition Ceremony on Wednesday, August 10. Certificates were given to the six Third Circuit pilot counties, six to Third Circuit staffers testing the program, 20 to IT staff, eight to other State Court Administrator's office staff, and five to contractors assigned to the program.

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**Welcome to the twelfth issue of the UJS Newsletter!**

**Articles, information and feedback are welcome. Articles and information will be printed as space allows. Please email your information to Gloria Guericke.**

## Chief Justice's Memo

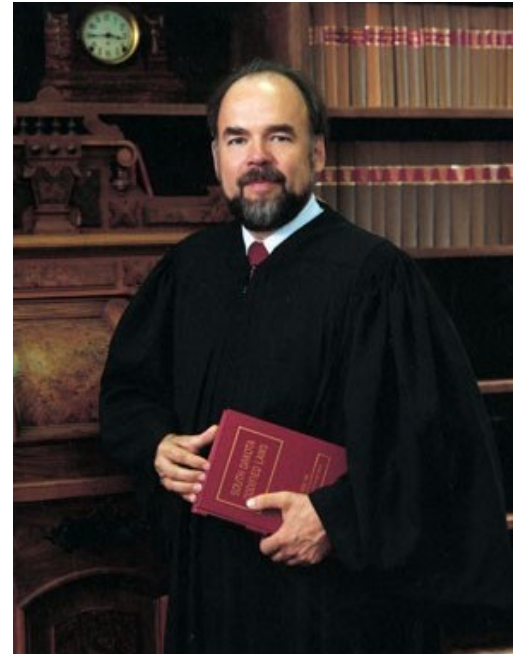
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Recently, I was digging through a pile of papers on one of my desks looking for a document. I was not having much luck. At the bottom of the pile I found a paper weight which said, "A cluttered desk is the sign of genius." I had lost the paper weight in the clutter that buried it.

We all seem to have more work to do than hours in the day to do it. Caseloads and filings increase in a financial world that does not allow for additional employees. This situation exists throughout the entire UJS.

My advice is to simply do the best you can. Do not be overwhelmed with the totality of the pile, but simply concentrate on the most immediate task in front of you.

As for me, I now have the satisfaction of once again being able to read the paper weight. Hopefully a sign of a good day. However, I am still looking for the missing document.



*Chief Justice David Gilbertson*

## State Court Administrator's Message

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As the floodwaters recede along the Missouri River, there is hope that life will soon return to normal. It has been a very long summer for those affected by the flooding in South Dakota. Even those not living near the river have been affected in one way or another.

They say that every dark cloud has a silver lining. The lining we discovered was how the community could pull together in an emergency to help out those in need. Many stepped in to help family, friends and strangers with sandbagging and the



*Patricia Duggan, State Court Administrator*

removal of items from homes that could be affected by flood water.

Others took in residents needing housing for several months during the flood. A number of families offered up their garages so that they could be used for storage.

The sandbags are slowly disappearing, families are returning to their homes, and we eagerly await the return to normalcy. The damage will be extensive in areas, but the important thing is that no lives were lost and some lessons were learned.





# Welcome to the Spink Co. Courthouse

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*As Chief Justice Gilbertson travels the state, he takes photos of the courthouses he visits. These photos have been used in the UJS Judiciary Message booklets and will now be used to feature a different courthouse in upcoming issues of the UJS newsletter.*

*A "thank you" to Alice Hare for providing information obtained from the Spink County Courthouse Dedication program, and from the Special Historical and Souvenir Edition of the Redfield Press.*

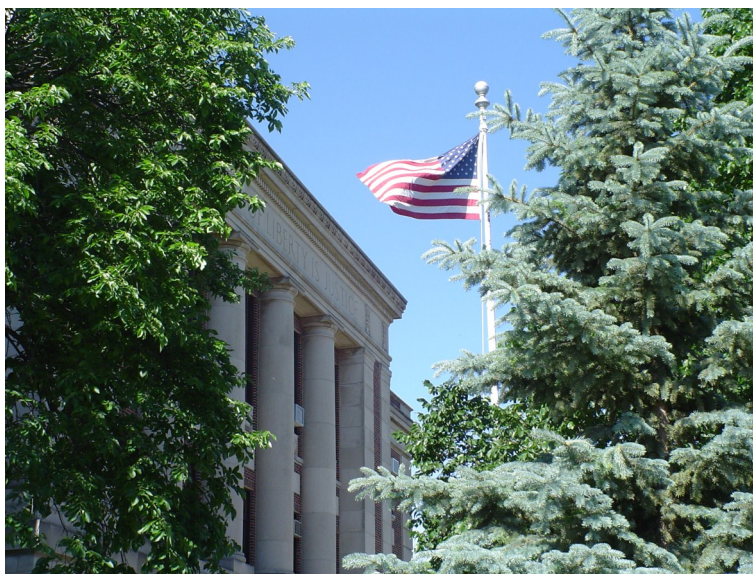
*Writer: Honorable William F. Bruell.*

*The Board of County Commissioners Under Whose Administration and Supervision the New Court House was Completed. (by Messrs. Toltz, King and Day, Architects).*

"The Spink County Courthouse was dedicated June 21-22, 1927. The total cost of the Courthouse, including extras, was \$347,342.71. The funds were raised by a general levy upon taxable property in the County from the years 1914 to 1926, inclusive, the levy being five-tenths of a mill except in the years 1914 and 1924, in which years the levy was one-tenth of a mill.

The building is 108 feet wide and 98 feet deep. A particular feature of the plan

of the building is the arrangement of a large central light well covered by a skylight around which (the) light well extend(s) to the corridors on



*Spink County Courthouse*

second and third floors. This gives an extremely monumental character to the interior and at the same time it results in extreme economy in space...

The first story of the interior of the building is faced with Indiana limestone and the body of the building above the first story is faced with well selected brick with a suitable amount of Indiana limestone trim. The walls around the interior of the rotunda are faced with Tavernele marble and all the floors around the rotunda are Tennessee marble...

The firm of Toltz, King and Day Inc...handled all work in connection with the new building including not only the

structure proper, but including the furniture and fittings as well. "

According to the article, the building's total cost came within the amount originally set aside as the amount originally determined as its cost. The amount which could be spent was originally so proportioned that it had not been necessary toward the last to cheapen furniture and fittings in order to keep within the appropriation. The materials throughout were felt to be well selected for their

attractiveness and durability and although no elaboration was incorporated, it was felt that a building of distinct architectural merit and monument had been achieved with a minimum amount of expenditure.

**A wise man learns  
by the mistakes  
of others, a fool by  
his own.**

Latin Proverb

# Judge Serves Justice. Campbell County Resident Sees Post as Public Service

*The following article is from the August 9, 2011 issue of the Aberdeen News, Aberdeen, S.D. Article by Jeff Natalie-Lees.*

When Judge Scott Myren was in law school, he thought he would never be a judge—until a professor told him he had the right qualities to be one.

“I always thought you had to be super brilliant to be a judge,” Myren said. “I looked around in law school, and I knew there were students smarter than me. The professor said that being a good judge was not only about intelligence, but about preparation, attitude and temperament.”

Now, at age 47, he is president of the South Dakota Judges Association, elected by his fellow judges.

***“It is really an honor to be elected by your peers,”...***

Myren was appointed an administrative law judge at age 29. At 34, he became a magistrate judge, and at 39, he was named circuit court judge in the 5th Circuit, which includes Brown County.

As president of the state association, he spearheads the judiciary’s response to legislative proposals, plans educational events and responds to needs of judges.

“It is really an honor to be elected by your peers,” he said.

## Genesis of interest

Myren became interested in law as an undergraduate at the University of South Dakota. The son of a Mobridge medical clinic administrator and a stay-at-home mother, he excelled academically at USD.



*Judge Scott Myren was recently elected president of the South Dakota Judges Association. (American News Photo by John Davis)*

He chose Rutgers Law School in New Jersey because his wife, Virginia Trexler-Myren, was attending veterinary school nearby at the University of Pennsylvania. They had met one summer near Custer when he was working at a campground and she was on vacation.

After graduating with their degrees, the couple moved to Denver.

Myren hoped to practice real estate law there, but after a time, the real estate market crashed.

“We usually have our own plans, but more often than not, fate plans things for you, and it works out pretty well,” he said.

Myren then took a job as a staff attorney with the South Dakota Supreme Court in Pierre. He worked in that position for five years, followed by five years as an administrative law judge and five years as a 6th Circuit magistrate judge. In both positions his home base was Pierre.

It was there the Myrens had their two daughters: Tessa, 16, and Isabel, 10.

Gov. Mike Rounds appointed Myren to his current position in the 5th Circuit in 2004. He primarily hears cases in Brown, Walworth, Campbell, Edmunds and McPherson counties. He also hears cases in other counties in the circuit—Spink, Marshall, Day and Roberts.

Civil cases range from small claims disputes over a few hundred dollars to multimillion-dollar lawsuits. Criminal cases range from murder to parking ticket appeals.

## Custody cases

Some of the hardest cases involve child custody, he said.

“Many times, there will be two parents who are both capable of raising the children, and in many cases there is no great reason to decide one way or another,” he said. “I know the decision will dramatically affect both the children and parents.”

In custody cases, he usually makes a plea for the parents to decide the issue among themselves.



## Milestones

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Supreme Court Justice  
Lori Wilbur



Presiding Judge John Brown



Circuit Administrator  
Kristi Wammen



Best wishes to our new Supreme Court Justice, Lori Wilbur;  
new Sixth Circuit Presiding Judge, John Brown;  
and Kristi Wammen, Circuit Administrator in the Seventh Circuit.

## Pro Se Clinics Offered Across the State

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Access to Justice is working with the UJS to provide assistance to pro se litigants in completing UJS approved legal forms, primarily the divorce forms.

As identified by the Planning & Administrative Advisory Council, this program focuses on areas of small and rural court issues, access to justice and public trust and confidence.

Accordingly, free clinics were first held in the following towns: Hot Springs, Winner, Lake Andes, Yankton, Elk Point, Canton, Sioux Falls and Mitchell. Clinics were then scheduled in the following towns: McIntosh, Selby, Aberdeen, Sisseton, Watertown, Brookings, Madison and Huron. Day trips were scheduled for Belle

Fourche, Deadwood, Sturgis and Pierre.

These clinics offer litigants assistance with the mechanics on completion of the forms and procedural guidance. Ideally, these clinics will enhance the litigant's understanding of the pro se process and if some forms are particularly problematic, we can address the specific issues.



## Judge Von Wald Named Outstanding Jurist for South Dakota

Judge Jack R. Von Wald received the prestigious Fred J. Nichol Award at the annual meeting of the South Dakota Trial Lawyers Association held at Sioux Falls, South Dakota on June 23, 2011. The award is given to the Outstanding Jurist of the Year for the State of South Dakota.

The Award was presented to Judge Von Wald by Judge David Gienapp of Madison, South Dakota, the recipient of last year's award for Outstanding Jurist. The Award is presented to one person who is deemed



*Judge Von Wald holding the Fred J. Nichol Award presented to him at the South Dakota Trial Lawyers Association annual meeting. The award is given to the Outstanding Jurist of the Year for the State of South Dakota.*

to be an outstanding member of the judiciary at the trial or appellate level, active or retired.

Judge Von Wald was sworn in as a Circuit Judge on March 7, 1994. In 2003, he was appointed to the position of Presiding Judge for the 5th Judicial Circuit, which includes the counties of Brown, Edmunds, McPherson, Walworth, Campbell, Faulk, Spink, Day, Marshall and Roberts. Judge Von Wald and his wife Diann reside at Aberdeen, South Dakota.

*Photo provided by South Dakota Trial Lawyers Association.*

## Cheryle Gering Sworn-in as Circuit Judge in 1st Judicial Circuit



Cheryle Gering was sworn in as Circuit Judge in the First Judicial Circuit by Presiding Judge Steven Jensen on Friday, July 1, 2:00 p.m., in the Yankton County Courthouse and Safety Center.

Judge Gering's received an undergraduate degree in political science and criminal justice studies in 1988 from USD, and she received her law degree from the University of Iowa in 1991. Prior to becoming a Circuit Judge, Ms. Gering had been in private practice with the Sioux Falls law firm of Davenport, Evans, Hurwitz and Smith.



# Court Services, Parole Agents, and Juvenile Corrections Agents Recognized with an Executive Proclamation

Chief Justice Gilbertson and Governor Daugaard co-signed an Executive Proclamation proclaiming July 17-23, as Court Services, Parole Agents and Juvenile Corrections Agents Week.

The Proclamation recognizes their work with the following wording:

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents are an essential part of the criminal justice system; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents uphold the law with dignity, while recognizing the right of the public to be safe-guarded from criminal activity; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents are responsible for supervising adult and juvenile offenders in the community; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents are trained professionals who provide services and referrals for offenders; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents work in partnership with community agencies and groups; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents provide services, support, and protection for victims; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents advocate community and restorative justice; and,

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents are a true force for positive change in their communities;

*Now, Therefore, We, Dennis Daugaard, Governor of the State of South Dakota, and David Gilbertson, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim July 17-23, 2011, as Court Services, Parole Agents, and Juvenile*

*Corrections Agents Week in South Dakota, and we encourage all citizens to honor these court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents, and to recognize their achievements.*



Thank you for the services you provide.

*Whereas*, Court services officers, parole agents, and juvenile corrections agents promote prevention, intervention, and advocacy; and,

# Northern Hills Drug Court Team Attends National Drug Court Institute Mentor Court Program

The Northern Hills Drug Court was sponsored by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) to participate in the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI) Mentor Court Program.

On January 4, 2011, the Northern Hills Drug Court Team spent the day with the San Diego Adult Drug Court. The day's activities included observing a team meeting and attending drug court.

*Several concepts obtained from San Diego have been incorporated within the Drug Court's weekly operations.*

Each member of the Northern Hills Drug Court returned rejuvenated and with a refreshed outlook toward working with the criminally addicted participants.

South Dakota attendees included Drug Court Judge Michelle Palmer-Percy, Prosecutor Jesse Sondreal, Defense Attorney Bruce Hubbard, Treatment Director Mary Wood-Fossen, and Court



*Members of the Northern Hills Drug Court Team and the San Diego Drug Court Team stop for lunch and a quick photo opportunity.*

Services Officers Jeanne Mann and Nicole Drew from the Seventh Circuit, and Chris Pankratz from the Fourth Circuit. Sheriff Ron Merwin was unavailable at the time of the site visit.

The Northern Hills Drug Court became a joint operation between the Fourth and Seventh Circuits in December of 2010. Court Services Officers, Chiefs, and Administrators have uniquely maximized available resources and services available to the Northern Hills Drug Court participants.

The program currently serves twenty-one active participants, a number that is continually increasing. The Drug Court now services prison-bound offenders from Circuit Court Judges of either the Fourth or Seventh Circuit, with supervision occurring in the core communities of Belle Fourche, Spearfish, Deadwood, Sturgis, and Rapid City.



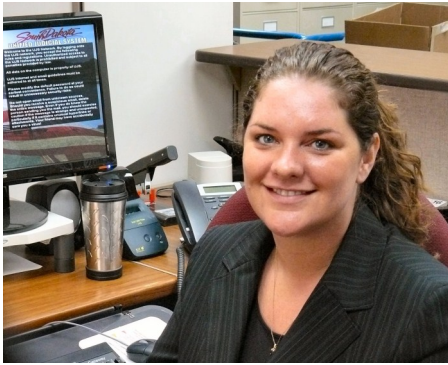
**One who understands much displays a greater simplicity of character than one who understands little.**

**Alexander Chase**



## Meet the Following New Employees...

**Misty Harkless** is the new Legal Research Secretary who provides support for the Supreme Court's staff attorneys, the Board of Bar Examiners, and the Supreme Court Law Library. Misty came to the Court from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service where she served as a Law Enforcement Support Assistant.



*Misty Harkless, Legal Research Secretary*

Misty is married to Eric Harkless, who is a Foreman for C & C Construction. They have three children. Dominick, 13, enjoys playing football; Cadence, 7, loves gymnastics; and Danica, 5, can't wait to start karate. Misty is happy to report that Danica entered kindergarten this fall.

When she isn't following her children's activities Misty enjoys camping, fishing, spending time with family and friends, and reading.



**Susan Neeman** started work in the UJS IT Department as a Court Operations Specialist on June 9, 2011.

Susan grew up in Redfield, SD and married after one year of college at Northern State. Susan spent several years traveling the country with her husband Ryan while he completed his service in the Navy. The Neemans moved back to South Dakota where Susan attended and graduated from Southeast Tech in Sioux Falls. After graduation, Susan worked at the Minnehaha County Juvenile Detention Center for two years entering court documents, doing intakes and assisting the administration staff.

Susan and her family moved to Pierre where she worked at the U.S. District Court Clerk's office as a Deputy Clerk for almost 10 years. She then decided it was time for a career change and was employed at the Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) in the Identification Section as an Identification Specialist, where she conducted



*Susan Neeman, IT Court Operations Specialist*

background checks and entered criminal charges from the fingerprint cards that were received.

Susan and Ryan have three children. The oldest daughter, Jade, is living in Spearfish. Coral graduated from high school this year and will be attending Stewart's in Sioux Falls. The youngest, Amber, will be in 8th grade and keeps her parents busy with her activities. Susan's husband, Ryan, is the head of the Biomedical Department at St. Mary's Hospital.

Susan looks forward to meeting new people and the new challenges associated with her job.

**The thing always happens that you really believe in; and the belief in a thing makes it happen.**

Frank Lloyd Wright

# **“Welcome Aboard” to the Following New UJS Employees**

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## **1st CIRCUIT:**

- Cheryle Gering, Circuit Judge
- Sarah Reyelts, Deputy Court Clerk I, Davison/Mitchell
- Thomas Cota, Circuit Law Clerk
- Amanda Fay, Circuit Law Clerk
- Lisa Wood, Deputy Court Clerk 1, Clay/Vermillion

## **2nd CIRCUIT:**

- Ann Uttecht, Deputy Court Clerk I, Minnehaha/Sioux Falls
- Cassidy Stalley, Circuit Law Clerk
- Cesar Juarez, Circuit Law Clerk
- Michelle Boone, Deputy Court Clerk 1, Minnehaha/Sioux Falls

## **3rd CIRCUIT:**

- Mindy Ovenden, Circuit Law Clerk
- Amanda Drennen, Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate I, Moody/Flandreau
- Roxanne Knapp, Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate I, Brookings/Brookings

## **4th CIRCUIT:**

- Kimberly George, Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate I, Lawrence/Deadwood
- Robbie Rohl, Circuit Law Clerk

## **5th CIRCUIT:**

- Erin Hagen, Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate I, Edmunds/Mina
- Kelsey Holien, Deputy Court Clerk, Brown/Aberdeen
- Patrick McCann, Circuit Law Clerk

## **6th CIRCUIT:**

- Alan Swartz, Court Services Officer, 6th Circuit
- Rebecca Altman, Court Clerk Magistrate I, Lyman/Kennebec
- Krista Schram, Circuit Law Clerk

## **7th CIRCUIT:**

- Cheryl Blackwell, Court Services Secretary, Pennington/Rapid City
- Tara Munsch, Court Services Officer, Pennington/Rapid City
- Nathan Oviatt, Circuit Law Clerk
- Jake Quasney, Circuit Law Clerk
- Ann Shepherd, Scheduling Clerk, Pennington/Rapid City
- Marya Vrooman Tellinghuisen, Circuit Court Staff Attorney, Pennington/Rapid City

## **SCAO/SUPREME COURT:**

- Susan Neeman, Court Operations Specialist

- Darci Propst, Clerk Accounting Analyst
- Misty Harkless, Legal Research Secretary
- Jessica Fjerstad, Supreme Court Law Clerk
- Robert Schlimgen, Supreme Court Law Clerk
- Sarah Gallagher, Deputy Supreme Court Clerk/Administrative Secretary
- Alicia Diaz, I/T Administrative Secretary

## **PROMOTION:**

- Lisa Johnson, Court Clerk Magistrate I, Moody/Flandreau

## **RETIREMENTS:**

- Arthur Rusch, Presiding Circuit Judge, 1st Circuit
- Rhonda Kirton, Deputy Court Clerk I, 2nd Circuit
- Lillian Relf, Court Clerk Magistrate I, 3rd Circuit
- Glenda Reder, Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate I, 7th Circuit
- Margie Huss, Deputy Court Clerk 1, 7th Circuit
- A.P. Fuller, Circuit Judge, 7th Circuit
- Judith Meierhenry, Supreme Court Justice, 4th Supreme Court District





## CSO Ann Durfee Receives Award

Behavior Management Systems (BMS) staff presented CSO Ann Durfee an award for the services she provides to juveniles and their families who are on Juvenile Intensive Probation.

BMS sent out their newsletter and noted the following: "In her role as officer for juveniles on intense probation, Ann Durfee works with understanding, compassion, and care as she guides troubled youth to make better choices. Ann,

acting on her desire to keep troubled youth at home with their families, partnered with BMS to create a comprehensive treatment program that addresses mental health, drug and

alcohol use, and the family as a unit."

**Congratulations, Ann!**

*PHOTO ON RIGHT: Randy Allen, representing Behavior Management Systems, presents a plaque to Ann Durfee. Cassidy Durfee and Chief Derrick Nedved joined Ann at the presentation.*



## Storm Damage at Moody County Courthouse

Courthouse employees spent about an hour in the basement of the Moody County Courthouse in Flandreau when a storm blew through on Friday, July 1, taking out the electricity and rupturing the gas line.

The downed trees and some of the damaged trees had to be removed. Note the bent flagpole.

Sioux Falls inmates were brought in to help with clean up.



*Storm damage outside the Moody County Courthouse.*



## Lillian Relf Retires After 20 Years with the UJS

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Lillian Relf's final day as Court Clerk Magistrate 1 in Moody County was June 8.

Circuit Administrator Tony Benning presented Lillian with a plaque recognizing her for her 20 years with the Unified Judicial System.

Lillian began work with the UJS in 1991 and worked as a Deputy Court Clerk Magistrate 1 and later as a Court Clerk Magistrate 1.

Best wishes to Lillian on her retirement!



*LEFT: Lillian Relf receives a plaque from Circuit Administrator Tony Benning recognizing her 20 years with the Unified Judicial System.*

## UJS Human Resources Director, Beth Urban, on the SD State Health Plan Summary Task Force

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A Task Force composed of current members, retirees, and BOP Benefits staff that have a working knowledge of the State's health plan was recently put together to review the summary health plan document. Beth Urban, UJS's Human Resources Director, was asked to be part

of this Task Force. The Task Force's goal is to provide a more user-friendly summary health plan document for all 26,000 users.

The Task Force came about after employees and retirees contacted the Bureau of Personnel about the difficulty

they have negotiating the plan document.

If you have any suggestions or have had difficulty navigating through the summary health plan document, please email your comments or concerns to Beth Urban.

***The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means and the exercise of ordinary qualities. These may for the most part be summed in these two:  
common-sense and perseverance.***

*Owen Feltham*

# Human Resources Corner

*The hourly and salaried Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) information below has been created to provide information on the similarities and differences of hourly and salaried positions. This information can also be found on the Intranet under the Human Resources section.*

## Hourly and Salaried Positions FAQ

### 1. What is the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)?

The FLSA is a federal law that establishes several standards aimed to protect the labor force from unfair practices. According to the United States Department of Labor, these standards include a federal minimum hourly wage, overtime pay that is no less than 1.5 times the regular wage, child labor regulations and record keeping-rules that mandate an employer keep information regarding employee hours and pay.

### 2. What does it mean to be hourly (non-exempt) or salaried (exempt) per FLSA?

Hourly employees are eligible for overtime payment of 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

Salaried employees are not eligible for overtime payment.

### 3. How do I become hourly or salaried?

A position is determined to be hourly or salaried by the State Court Administrator's office pursuant to the provisions of FLSA and is dependent on the functions of the position not the individual employee.



*Beth Urban, Director, and Lisa Mammenga, Personnel Specialist, from the UJS Human Resources Office.*

### 4. What are the similarities between hourly and salaried positions?

Hourly and salaried employees should accurately record their hours worked on the Time Keeping System (TKS).

Hourly and salaried employees should gain approval from their supervisors if they do not work their normal work schedule of Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with an hour lunch break.

### 5. What is the difference between hourly and salaried positions?

Hourly employees receive

payment for every hour worked and overtime when appropriate, and salaried employees receive payment as 1/24 of their annual salary and no overtime.

Hourly employees who work on days not part of their normal work schedule such as a Saturday or Sunday may adjust their workweek to ensure they do not work over 40 hours to avoid overtime. Salaried employees may not adjust their hours in this way as they are not eligible for overtime and must have hours worked during their normal work schedule.

Hourly employees may take paid leave in less than 8-hour increments and under normal circumstances a salaried employee cannot take paid leave in less than 8-hour increments (unless they are on Family and Medical Leave).

Salaried employees are expected to work on average at least 40-hours per week.

Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.

George Patton  
(from Big Dog's Quotes)

## Karn's Column

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### ***Influence with Focused Comments***

You don't need to speak first, loudest or most often to be the most influential person in a group. Capture attention and build your reputation when you:

**Clarify the problem.** When the discussion has spun out of control, bring everyone back to the main point. Define or redefine the problem the group is attempting to resolve. Follow that by offering your solution.

**Make the connections.** While others work only at making their own points, step



*Karn Barth,  
Judicial Branch Educator*



back and see how to combine different ideas for a better result.

**Review.** Participants in a lengthy discussion can lose track of what ground they have covered. Take a moment to briefly summarize the conversation.

A few well-timed remarks to direct the conversation will have more impact than a lengthy monologue.

—Adapted from “Want to Get Heard? Say Less,” Dawn Lennon, *Business Fitness*, <http://dawnlennon.wordpress.com>. Article printed in the *Communication Briefing* newsletter, October 2011. [www.CommunicationBriefings.com](http://www.CommunicationBriefings.com)

## Eric Strawn, 4th Judicial Circuit Child Support Referee

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*Eric Strawn, new Child Support  
Referee in the Fourth  
Judicial Circuit*

Eric Strawn of Strawn Law, P.C. in Spearfish, South Dakota has been appointed to serve as the Child Support Referee for the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

Eric is a native of South Dakota. After a successful tour in the U.S. Marine Corps, Eric graduated from Black Hills State University in 2001 with a double major in Speech Communication and Psychology.

Eric graduated from the University of South Dakota School of Law in 2004 with a Juris Doctorate and a Masters in History. He was immediately employed by the Fourth Judicial Circuit as a Law Clerk until 2005. Thereafter, he practiced law in Spearfish in a small firm until 2010 when he opened his own practice.

Eric currently serves on the Fourth Judicial Circuit Mental Health Board and is the current President of the Spearfish Chamber of Commerce.

Eric recently celebrated ten years of marriage. He and his wife, Racquelle, have two children, ages 6 and 5. Eric enjoys family activities and participating in martial arts, specifically Hapkido and Tae Kwon Do.



# Odyssey Go-Live Pilot Approaching

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*The Odyssey project schedule is advancing toward the rescheduled date of November 7 for the Go-Live date for the six pilot counties of the Third Judicial Circuit.*

*The decision to reschedule was based on the need for additional testing and adjustments in several areas. The delay was something we struggled with and hoped to avoid, but the need to provide a reliable and accurate system to the Pilot user is a necessity and our highest priority.*

## **What's happening now?**

*UJS Training and IT staff will provide 'refresher' training for pilot county staff to*

*address the extended time between initial classes and the rescheduled Go-Live date. The work to complete and finalize the requirements for a successful Pilot has intensified.*

## **What's on the horizon?**

Look for future emails on changes to record searches and merging demographics.

A record search will include reports in both Legacy and Odyssey. The Odyssey client will be installed on a system in each courthouse and that user will be provided training on running the Odyssey report.

Merging Security will be removed for all users except Merge Centers. Steps on

using a public folder to submit merge requests will be provided.

## **What can I learn about Odyssey?**

Information is available on the UJS internet and intranet sites to give insight into Odyssey:

- \* Watch a short video on entering a traffic citation at <http://uj.s.sd.gov/> .

- \* Select the UJS Case Management System Status item in the Court News section located in middle of screen and 'click' the link at the end of the article.

- \* Review the Odyssey Basics documentation on the intranet by selecting: <http://uj.s.sd.gov/> -> Court Staff Logon -> Odyssey.



# Legal Form Help Line

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The Legal Form Help Line received its 150th call on August 30, 2011.

The Help Line was set up by the UJS in conjunction with the University of South Dakota School of Law, in order to provide assistance with legal forms to individuals who are representing themselves in court.

The law student volunteers only help individuals fill out

the forms from the South Dakota Unified Judicial System. They cannot provide legal advice or assist in

completing forms from other states.

Judge Rusch and Circuit Administrator Kim Allison provided training to the volunteers last

spring. The Help Line is proving to be a valuable tool for self-represented litigants in South Dakota, a valuable resource for our judges and

clerks, as well as a unique educational experience for the law school students who are fielding most of the calls.

Not surprisingly, over 50% of the calls have been regarding the divorce forms. Another 15% were regarding custody and visitation issues, and the rest varied greatly.

The Legal Form Help Line toll-free number is 1-855-784-0004.

For more information about the program, contact Kim Allison at (605) 668-5685.

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